

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 EUR-10 IO-03

AID-10 SR-02 ORM-01 RSR-01 /080 W

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R 140401Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4582

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 12696

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJ: MR 2 SITREP JULY 13

HEREWITH REPEAT OF AMCONSUL NHA TRANG MESSAGE 0692 FOR YOUR ACTION
AND INFO QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NHA TRANG 0692

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 SITREP JULY 13

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SECURITY SITUATION: KONTUM CONTINUED TO BE MILITARY REGION
2'S MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONFLICT DURING THE 48 HOUR REPORTING
PERIOD WITH NINE OF THIRTY INCIDENTS REPORTED BY MR-2 REGIONAL
HEADQUARTERS AT NHA TRANG TAKING PLACE IN THAT PROVINCE. THE
THIRTY INCIDENTS EXACTLY EQUALS THE NUMBER REPORTED IN THE
PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD. BINH DINH HAD SIX INCIDENTS ATTRI-
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BUTED TO IT, WHILE BINH THUAN HAD FOUR, PHU YEN SIX, PLEIKU

THREE AND QUANG DUC AND PHU BON ONE EASH. DURING THE 48 HOUR PERIOD CONTINUED FIGHTING IN KONTUM DID NOT RESULT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES OF POSITION BY EITHER SIDE.

2. CASUALTIES SUSTAINED BY BOTH SIDES WERE: VC/NVA-23 KIA (16 IN KONTUM) AND ONE VC SUSPECT CAPTURED; GVN-6 KIA (4 IN KOMTUM) AND 23 WIA (12 IN KONTUM). THE GVN ALSO CREDITED ITSELF WITH DESTROYING 100 VC STRUCTURES IN PHU YEN PROVINCE.

3. QUANG DUC PROVINCE: PROV REP QUANG DUC REPORTED ON JULY 11 THAT MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE OLD BU PRANG AREA HAD INCREASED OF LATE, AS THE NVA IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO PREVENT PROVINCIAL FORCES FROM INTERDICTING THE FLOW OF COMMUNIST TRUCK TRAFFIC ALONG ROUTE 309 TO WHERE IT CONNECTS WITH THEIR EXTENSION SOUTH OF CAMBODIAN ROUTE 14 (YU 611 555). PROV REP'S ARVN INTERPRETER STATES THAT THERE HAVE BEEN EIGHT OR NINE FRIENDLY KIA AND A PROPORTIONAL NUMBER OF WOUNDED IN THE AREA DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS, MOSTLY FROM INDIRECT FIRE. SECTOR CHIEF OF STAFF, HOWEVER, REPORTS ONLY ONE KIA AND TWO WIA. WHEN ASKED IF HE HAD ANY INDICATIONS OF A CHANGE IN ENEMY STRENGTH AND/OR AMBITION, THE CHIEF OF STAFF REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE. NEVERTHELESS, THE HEADQUARTERS AND THE ARTILLERY PLATOON OF ONE OF QUANG DUC'S THREE RF BATTALIONS HAS BEEN MOVED TO BU BON (YU687 512) THE NEAREST FRIENDLY OUTPOST IN THE AREA IN QUESTION.

4. PROV REP SUGGESTED THAT HE MAY NOT BE RECEIVING COMPLETE INFORMATION FROM GVN SOURCES AND ADDED THAT HIS INTERPRETER STATES THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT A "HIGHER HEADQUARTERS" HAD ORDERED SECTOR NOT TO REVEAL IMPORTANT CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, PARTICULARLY MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, TO AMERICANS.

5. WORKING ON THE RAILROAD: CONSUL PHAN THIET REPORTS THAT THREE RAILROAD BRIDGE EXPLOSIONS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS DRAMATIZE THE PROBLEM OF OPENING THE RAILROAD INTO BINH THUAN. THE PROVINCE CHIEF, COL GNHIA, HAS REPEATEDLY DEPLORED THE REQUIREMENT FOR ASSIGNING TROOPS TO PROTECT A SERVICE SO EASILY PUT OUT OF ACTION, BUT IT APPARENTLY REMAINS MILITARY REGION HEADQUARTERS' POLICY TO RESUME SERVICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO SONG MAO AND EVEN BEYOND.

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6. JMC VISIT: A GVN TPJMC DELEGATION FROM SAIGON ARRIVED IN PHAN THIET (HEADQUARTERS OF REGION IV) ON JULY 11 TO INSPECT GVN JMC FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS THE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT SET ASIDE FOR PRG USE AT SUCH TIME AS DEPLOYMENT OCCURS. ON JULY 11 THEY VISITED THE AIRFIELD QUARTERS SCHEDULED FOR PRG OCCUPANCY AND ON JULY 12 INSPECTED THE PHAN RANG TEAM SITE. THE GROUP ALSO PLANS TO LOOK AT THE DALAT AND BAO LOC SITES BEFORE RETURNING TO SAIGON.

7. ICCS: ICCS REGION IV HEADQUARTERS (PHAN THIET) ON JULY 13 WAS STILL AWAITING AUTHORIZATION ON WHETHER OR NOT THE INVESTIGATORS OF THE JUNE 26 FIRING AT AN ICCS INVESTIGATING TEAM IN BINH TUY PROVINCE MAY VISIT THE SITE OF THE INCIDENT.

8. LAM DONG PROVINC: LAM DONG PROVINCE CHIEF, LT COL LUU THANH HUU, TOLD CONGEN OFFICER ON JULY 11 THAT HE IS AT PRESENT UNDER PRESSURE FROM SEVERAL SIDES AND THAT HE HAS ASKED MR 2 CORPS COMMANDER, MAJ GEN TOAN, FOR PERMISSION TO RESIGN. THOUGH HIS REQUEST WAS DENIED, LT COL HUU CONTENDS THAT IT UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL REMAIN IN LAM DONG MUCH LONGER. HE BASED THIS PREDICTION ON PROBLEMS HE IS ENCOUNTERING WITH: (1) THE PROGRAM FOR UPGRADING RF/PF TO ARVN; (2) THE DIFFICULTIES OF SUPPORTING 11,000 BINH LONG REFUGEES RESETTLED IN LAM DONG LAST MONTH; AND (3) MR 2 HEAD-QUARTERS ENCROACHMENT IN THE AREA OF FOREST CONTROL WHICH HERETOFORE HAD BEEN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVINCE OFFICIALS.

9. LT COL HUU EXPLAINED THAT, ALTHOUGH HE HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM JGS ON JUNE 18 CANCELLING THE REQUIREMENT LEVIED BY MR 2 FOR ADDITIONAL INCREMENTS OF RF/PF TO BE SENT TO ARVN, HE RECEIVED WITHIN THE PAST FEW DAYS AN MR 2 ORDER DIRECTING HIM TO DISPATCH THE EQUIVALENT OF SEVERAL RF COMPANIES TO THE TWO MR 2 ARVN DIVISIONS. HUU SAID THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER BECAUSE HIS TROOPS WILL SIMPLY NOT LEAVE THE PROVINCE. EVEN THOSE UNITS WHICH ARE SLATED FOR OUT-OF-PROVINCE TRAINING, NOT UPGRADING, DESERT BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE DAY OUT OF FEAR THAT THE TRAINING IS JUST A PLOY TO GET THEM TO THE DIVISIONS. HUU SAID THAT THE ARVN UPGRADING PROGRAM HAS CAUSED HIM TO LOSE LOCAL PRESTIGE AND HAS ALSO

SERIOUSLY REDUCED HIS ABILITY TO COMMAND HIS TROOPS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 12696

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10. HUU'S PROBLEMS WITH THE BINH LONG REFUGEES STEM FROM INADEQUATE MINISTERIAL SUPPORT FOR RESETTLEMENT. BECAUSE THE REFUGEES HAVE NOT BEEN AFFORDED ADEQUATE MONEY TO PURCHASE LUMBER FOR HOUSE CONSTRUCTION (IN VIEW OF LOCAL MARKET CONDITIONS), HUU HAS BEEN FORCED TO INITIATE UNORTHODOX MEASURES TO MAKE AVAILABLE LUMBER WHICH THE REFUGEES CAN AFFORD TO BUY. THESE INVOLVED THE OPENING OF CERTAIN LANDS NEAR RESETTLEMENT SITES FOR LUMBER EXPLOITATION BY LOCAL CONTRACTORS AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF LOCAL BUSINESSMEN TO BUILD SAW MILLS NEAR THE SITES IN ORDER TO REDUCE TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES. THESE MEASURES HAVE HAD TO BE CURTAILED OWING TO OPPOSITION FROM THE MINISTERS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES AND AGRICULTURE, WHO RESPECTIVELY OBJECTED TO THE RESULTANT BENEFITS TO ETHNIC VIETNAMESE LUMBER CONTRACTORS AND THE LOSS OF REVENUES INCURRED BY THE SALE OF NOT FULLY MATURE FORESTLANDS. THE FORMER MINISTER, ACCORDING TO HUU, HAS PETITIONED PRESIDENT THIEU FOR HUU'S RELIEF ON THIS ISSUE, EVEN THOUGH THE LUMBER ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN CONDUCTED WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE REFUGEES (WHO BELONG TO THE STIENG TRIBE). ADDITIONALLY, HUU SAID THAT HE HAS HAD NO SUCCESS IN OBTAINING AUTHORIZATION FROM THE MR 2 CHIEF OF ENGINEERS FOR THE REPAIR OF THE NEARLY IMPASSABLE ROAD GOING FROM BAO LOC TO THE RESETTLEMENT SITES BECAUSE THE CHIEF ENGINEER WANTS A PERSONAL GRATUITY BEFORE HE WILL AUTHORIZE THE REPAIRS. HUU STATED THAT HE BELIEVES MAJ
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GEN TOAN IS SUPPORTING THE CHIEF ENGINEER'S POSITION.

11. HUU CONCLUDED THAT THE FINAL BLOW TO HIS OFFICE AS PROVINCE CHIEF CAME ON JULY 10 WHEN HE WAS ORDERED TO ASSEMBLE ALL LOCAL LUMBER CONTRACTORS AND DIRECT THEM REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING SECURITY CLEARANCE FOR CUTTING TIMBER IN FORESTLANDS. IN THE PAST, AFTER A CONTRACTOR HAD PURCHASED THE RIGHTS TO CUT LUMBER IN A SECTOR OF FORESLAND, HE ONLY NEEDED AUTHORIZATION FROM THE PROVINCE CHIEF BEFORE HE COULD BEGIN CUTTING. BY THE NEW MR 2 DIRECTIVE THE CONTRACTOR MUST NOW REQUEST SECURITY

CLEARANCE FOR CUTTING FROM A COMMITTEE OF SENIOR REGIONAL STAFF OFFICERS CHAIRED BY THE MR 2 DEPUTY OF PACIFICATION IN NHA TRANG. THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE WILL DETERMINE THE LOYALTIES OF THE APPLICANTS, AND THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE PROPOSED TRACT OF FORESTLAND. THIS PROCEDURE, SAID HUU, WILL CAUSE GREAT HARDSHIPS FOR THE CONTRACTORS, WHO WILL HAVE TO TRAVEL TO NHA TRANG

FOR EACH AUTHORIZATION, AND WILL, IN EFFECT, BE A LICENSE TO STEAL FOR THE REGIONAL STAFF OFFICERS, WHO CAN BE EXPECTED TO DEMAND CONSIDERABLE BRIBES BEFORE THEY AUTHORIZE CUTTING.

12. THIS LAST ASSERTION WAS ALSO THE OPINION OF SEVERAL LUMBER CONTRACTORS WHO TOLD THE CONGEN OFFICER THAT UNDER THE NEW PROCEDURE THEY WILL NOT ONLY HAVE TO BUY OFF THE LOCAL VC AND GVN OFFICIALS, AS THEY HAVE HAD TO PREVIOUSLY, BUT THE MR 2 COMMANDER AS WELL.
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